

## **USHE TASK FORCE ON MINORITY AND DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS**

**Co-Chairs: David S. Doty, Assistant Commissioner & Director of Policy Studies, Utah System of Higher Education; David Richardson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Salt Lake Community College**

### **Priority Recommendations to Utah State Board of Regents**

**Submitted December 2006**

The Task Force affirms:

This issue is urgent and of extreme importance to the State of Utah.

Any obstacles or barriers to higher education anyone may currently experience must be addressed.

Education is valued by all people in the State of Utah.

All students in the State of Utah shall have access, opportunity, preparation, and expectation for success in higher education.

### **Recommendations for Action**

Five categories of recommendations are identified, in priority order: Campus Academic Support, Pre-School through Grade 12 Preparation, Financial Aid, College Mentoring and Outreach, Public Relations/Communications Campaign. The Task Force has also prioritized the recommendations within each category, and attached a fiscal note to the top priorities, as follows:

Categories' Priorities	Priorities Within Categories	Priority of Item Overall (Unrelated to Categories)	Action Item	Fiscal Note
			<b>Campus Academic Support</b> Campus Academic Support - Designate or establish a senior-level administrator at each institution who is assigned to coordinate and work on improving participation and completion rates for underrepresented populations.	\$0-\$100,000 per institution, depending on whether additional administrators are hired
1	1		Campus Academic Support - Recruit and retain faculty and administrators from diverse backgrounds.	
1	2		Campus Academic Support - Seek additional funding to provide for additional academic advisors from diverse backgrounds at each institution and/or other services as necessary.	
1	3		Campus Academic Support - Ensure that each institution's mission statement specifically and emphatically reflects a commitment to success for all students.	
	4		<b>Pre-school through Grade 12 Preparation</b>	
2	2	1	P-12 Preparation - Advocate for quality pre-school programs and full-day kindergarten for all children through partnerships with the Utah State Office of Education, public school leaders, and community organizations. (Support the Governor's Initiative for voluntary full-day kindergarten for at-risk students.)	\$7.0 million (Governor Huntsman's 2006 budget request)

Categories' Priorities	Priorities Within Categories	Priority of Item Overall (Unrelated to Categories)	Action Item	Fiscal Note
	2		<p>P-12 Preparation - Emphasize a secondary school curriculum that is reflective of the race and culture of students of color; hold special events on college campuses several times each year for both students and teachers on how to build an inclusive curriculum. USHE teacher education programs should ensure that all teacher candidates receive training and instruction on effective teaching of students from diverse racial and language backgrounds.</p>	

<b>Categories' Priorities</b>	<b>Priorities Within Categories</b>	<b>Priority of Item Overall (Unrelated to Categories)</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Fiscal Note</b>
		3	P-12 Preparation - Provide substantial incentives for underrepresented students to complete a rigorous program of study in secondary school (e.g., Regents' Scholarship, Academic Competitiveness Grants, SMART grants, etc.)	\$7,000,000-\$8,000,000 for Regents/Utah Scholars Scholarship of \$1,000 per student
		4	P-12 Preparation - Hold an annual summit for all secondary school guidance counselors regarding academic expectations and opportunities for underrepresented students.	
		5	P-12 Preparation - Encourage all students (with parental involvement), beginning in early middle school, to take a rigorous program of study in secondary school to be prepared for college (e.g., State Scholars curriculum, New Century Scholarship curriculum, etc.)	\$500,000 to continue and expand State Scholars Initiative for 2007-2008 school year

Priorities Within Categories	Priority of Item Overall (Unrelated to Categories)	Action Item	Fiscal Note
------------------------------	--	-------------	-------------

Categories' Priorities		<b>Financial Aid</b> Financial Aid - Seek funding for additional state need-based financial aid for students, such as UCOPE and the Student Assistance Grants program in Florida.	\$3.4 million (UCOPE and other need-based financial aid programs)
1		Financial Aid - Seek funding for a scholarship program for first-generation college students similar to the First Generation Matching Grant Program in Florida. Such a program would provide state funds to match private donations on a dollar-for-dollar basis to provide grants to undergraduate students who are Utah residents and who meet "first generation" status—i.e., neither parent earned a bachelor's or higher degree, are accepted into a state college, enroll at least part-time, demonstrate financial need, and meet other criteria established by individual institutions.	
2			Financial Aid - Seek funding for a scholarship program targeting low-income and disadvantaged students who are at risk of dropping out of school, such as the STARS Program in Florida. Scholarships might be provided for targeted students (primarily in middle school) who are Utah residents, eligible for free and reduced lunch, remain drug and crime free, who progress academically, who meet school attendance requirements, abide by the school's code of conduct, and who meet with a mentor on a regular basis. The proposed Regents' Scholarship could be modified to accommodate this type of program.
3			Financial Aid – Seek funding (corporate or legislative) for tuition assistance for diverse students who work in the community while going to college.
4			

		Financial Aid – Establish the procedure necessary to provide Pell Grant awards to middle-school students based on their eligibility for the federal school-lunch program. This allows students to embrace the possibility of a college education for themselves at an earlier age, removing any financial stigma, thereby providing the possibility of participating in higher education, and promoting student desire to engage in appropriate rigorous coursework for college preparation.
	5	

Categories 'Priorities'	Priorities Within Categories	Priority of Item Overall (Unrelated to Categories)	Action Item	Fiscal Note
			<b>College Mentoring and Outreach</b>	\$1.0 million (the Florida program on which this recommendation is based is currently funded at \$3.4 million and serves nearly 9,000 students)
		1	College Mentoring and Outreach - Develop and fund a state-level program modeled on GEAR UP and TRIO such as the College Reach-Out Program in Florida.	
		2	College Mentoring and Outreach - Provide substantial incentives for college students to encourage their involvement in meaningful service learning and mentoring of underrepresented students at both the high school and college level; expand efforts of USHE service learning programs such as Campus Compact.	
		3	College Mentoring and Outreach - Establish homework and academic resource centers at college and high school campuses, libraries, community centers, and other locations where they will be easily accessible to students and families in low income areas to assist students with course work, college planning, etc. Seek funding from the Utah Legislature, as well as from corporate partners and foundations committed to the mission of early college preparation. Offer incentives for all community members, including those with diverse backgrounds, to help at such centers.	
		4		

	4	College Mentoring and Outreach – Implement a peer diverse student recruiting effort using community centers and diverse private small businesses as messengers.
	5	College Mentoring and Outreach - Enlist the support of local churches and community organizations in college outreach efforts. Encourage community based programs initiated by community members.

Categories 'Priorities'	Priorities Within Categorie s	Priority of Item Overall (Unrelate d to Categori es)	Action Item  <b>Public Relations/Communications Campaign</b>  Public Relations/Communications Campaign - Implement a system-wide communications strategy that dovetails with the Regents' "Building a Better State of Minds" campaign but that also targets and validates the home culture of students of color.	Fiscal Note
1				\$25,000-\$50,000 for print and Web media campaign; \$250,000-\$300,000 for television and radio campaign
5	2		Public Relations/Communications Campaign - Develop a clear explanation of different higher education options available at each USHE institution and what students can expect from each in terms of employment opportunities and earning potential upon completion of a certificate or degree.	
3			Public Relations/Communications Campaign - Implement a Public Relations/Communications plan, incorporating targeted messages on the Utah System of Higher Education and Utah Mentor Web sites, that specifically engages and communicates with all parents, regardless of their background and language and provides information, such as tuition/scholarship assistance available and how to get it.	